Veterans Affairs Canada | Anciens Combattants Canada

Departmental Performance Report
2012-13

Hon. Julian Fantino, PC, MP
Minister of Veterans Affairs

Canada

Table of Contents

Minister's Message 1
Section I: Organizational Overview 3
Raison d'être 3
Responsibilities 3
Veterans Affairs Canada 3
Veterans Ombudsman 4
Strategic Outcomes and Program Alignment Architecture 5
Organizational Priorities 6
Risk Analysis 12
Operating Environment 12
Summary of Performance 14
Financial Resources 14
Human Resources 14
Performance Summary Table for Strategic Outcomes and Programs 15
Expenditure Profile 16
Departmental Spending Trend 16
Estimates by Vote 17
Contribution to the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy 17
Section II: Analysis of Programs and Sub-Programs by Strategic Outcomes 18
Strategic Outcomes 18
Programs and Sub-Programs 19
Program 1.1 – Disability and Death Compensation 19
Program 1.2 – Financial Support Program 24
Program 1.3 – Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services 28
Program 2.1 – Canada Remembers Program 39
Program 3.1 – Veterans Ombudsman 48
Program 4.1 – Internal Services 50
Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS) 52

Section III Supplementary Information 53
Financial Statements Highlights 53
Condensed Statement of Operations and Departmental Net Financial Position 53
Condensed Statement of Financial Position 54
Supplementary Information Tables 54
Tax Expenditures and Evaluations Report 54
Section IV: Other Items of Interest 55
Organizational Contact Information 55
Websites 55
Publications 55

Minister's Message

Canadians are proud of their Veterans and men and women in uniform. They recognize the great courage required to serve in harm's way and the enormous sacrifices that come with it.

As Canada's new Minister of Veterans Affairs, I am honoured to be building on our Government's commitment to deliver, on behalf of all Canadians, the care and support to those who have served our country so well. I am also pleased to lead a Department that is firmly dedicated to supporting and honouring Canada's Veterans, still-serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), and their families. As Minister, I value the use of evidence in decision making, critical to the design, development and modernization of programs and services for Canada's Veterans.

The 2012-13 Departmental Performance Report for Veterans Affairs Canada confirms our Government's pledge to continue transforming the Department to meet the changing demographics of those we serve and to deliver the faster and better service they deserve. Through our ongoing *Cutting Red Tape for Veterans* initiative, we are simplifying complex policies and programs, streamlining business processes and introducing new technologies to ensure Veterans, still-serving members and their families are aware of and have timely access to the benefits and services they need. These efforts were highlighted in the past year with the launch of a suite of e-services that included the new *Veterans Benefits Browser*, *My VAC Book*, and the expanded *My VAC Account*.

At the same time, we continue to improve Veterans benefits and programs to meet the increasingly complex and diverse needs of the Veterans and other Canadians we serve. That is why our Government has directed the Department to enhance, further strengthen collaboration, and find synergies with other key federal departments (including National Defence) as well as non-profit groups and the private sector. The new *Veterans Transition Action Plan* brings together all of these partners in a comprehensive approach to help all Veterans make the best possible transition to civilian life.

As well, our Government remains proudly committed to recognizing and honouring the service and sacrifice of all Veterans and their families. Through the use of both traditional and emerging communications tools, the Department is encouraging Canadians of all ages to engage in commemoration. In addition, our Government declared 2013 as the Year of the Korean War Veteran to mark the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Korean War Armistice.

Serving and honouring Canada's Veterans is a noble calling. Our Government is privileged to provide world-class care and support to Canada's Veterans on behalf of our grateful nation.

The Honourable Julian Fantino, PC, MP
Minister of Veterans Affairs

Section I: Organizational Overview

Raison d'être

Canada's development as an independent country with a unique identity stems in no small measure from its achievements in times of war with a good part of our modern identity also associated with pride in Canada's enviable peacekeeping record. However, Canada's contribution to global peace and security, both as ally and peacekeeping partner, has come at a heavy price in terms of lives sacrificed, health forfeited and hopes unfulfilled.

Veterans Affairs exists to repay the nation's debt of gratitude toward those whose courageous efforts have given us this legacy and have contributed to our growth as a nation.

Responsibilities

Veterans Affairs Canada

Veterans Affairs Canada achieves its mandate by providing services and benefits that respond to the needs of Veterans, other individuals and their families.

Veterans Affairs Canada has three main roles:

Provider of disability compensation and financial support – Veterans Affairs Canada administers programs which recognize and compensate for the disabling effects of service-related disabilities. The Department also provides financial support and assistance when career-ending or service-related disabilities affect one's ability to earn income.

Funder for health care and re-establishment services – The Department works with other levels of government—federal, provincial and territorial—to provide access to health programs that enhance the well-being of Veterans and other eligible individuals, promote independence and ensure continued care. The Department also provides support to Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and their families to ease their transition to civilian life.

Catalyst for national and international remembrance – The Department keeps alive the achievements and sacrifices of those who served Canada in times of war, military conflict and peace, and promotes the importance of these efforts on Canadian life as we know it today. Veterans Affairs Canada fosters remembrance of the contributions made by Canada's war dead and Veterans through its Canada Remembers Program[i]. It also maintains and operates 14 memorial sites in Europe.

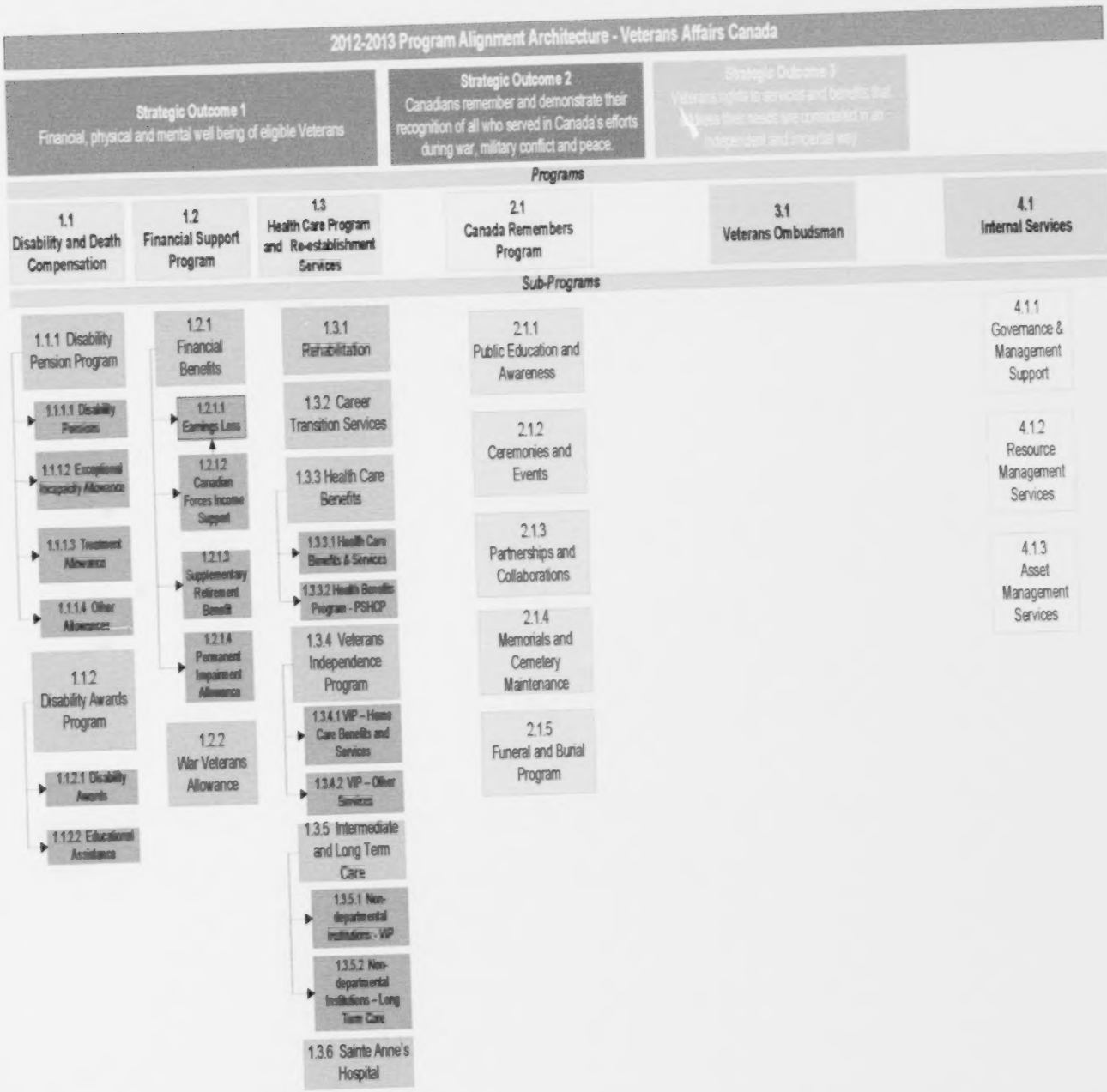
Veterans Ombudsman

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman helps Veterans and their families address concerns related to the Department and the *Veterans Bill of Rights*[ii]. As an impartial and independent officer, the Veterans Ombudsman reports directly to the Minister of Veterans Affairs and works to ensure that Veterans, their representatives and their families are treated fairly.

Note: Announced in 2007, the Veterans Ombudsman assists Veterans to pursue their concerns and advance their issues.

Strategic Outcomes and Program Alignment Architecture

Veterans Affairs Canada works to achieve three strategic outcomes (SOs). The following chart outlines these strategic outcomes as well as the program activities and sub activities that flow from them.


2012-2013 Program Alignment Architecture - Veterans Affairs Canada
Strategic Outcome 1
Financial, physical and mental well being of eligible Veterans
Strategic Outcome 2
Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace.
Strategic Outcome 3
Programs
1.1 Disability and Death Compensation
1.2 Financial Support Program
1.3 Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services
2.1 Canada Remembers Program
3.1 Veterans Ombudsman
4.1 Internal Services
Sub-Programs
1.1.1 Disability Pension Program
1.1.1.1 Disability Pensions
1.1.1.2 Exceptional Incapacity Allowance
1.1.1.3 Treatment Allowance
1.1.1.4 Other Allowances
1.1.2 Disability Awards Program
1.1.2.1 Disability Awards
1.1.2.2 Educational Assistance
1.2.1 Financial Benefits
1.2.1.1 Earnings Loss
1.2.1.2 Canadian Forces Income Support
1.2.1.3 Supplementary Retirement Benefit
1.2.1.4 Permanent Impairment Allowance
1.2.2 War Veterans Allowance
1.3.1 Rehabilitation
1.3.2 Career Transition Services
1.3.3 Health Care Benefits
1.3.3.1 Health Care Benefits & Services
1.3.3.2 Health Benefits Program - PSHCP
1.3.4 Veterans Independence Program
1.3.4.1 VIP – Home Care Benefits and Services
1.3.4.2 VIP – Other Services
1.3.5 Intermediate and Long Term Care
1.3.5.1 Non-departmental Institutions - VIP
1.3.5.2 Non-departmental Institutions – Long Term Care
1.3.6 Sainte Anne's Hospital
2.1.1 Public Education and Awareness
2.1.2 Ceremonies and Events
2.1.3 Partnerships and Collaborations
2.1.4 Memorials and Cemetery Maintenance
2.1.5 Funeral and Burial Program
4.1.1 Governance & Management Support
4.1.2 Resource Management Services
4.1.3 Asset Management Services

Organizational Priorities

Modernization of the Department	**New in 2012-13**
The Veteran population being served by Veterans Affairs Canada is rapidly changing and so too are the needs and expectations of Veterans and their families. In order to meet the increasingly complex needs and higher service expectations of this evolving group, the Department must fundamentally change its existing processes, systems and culture. Modernizing the Department as a whole will result in a revitalized, streamlined and responsive Department that is better positioned to deliver on its mandate.	**Contributing to:** All strategic outcomes and program activities

Results Achieved

Veterans Affairs Canada is undergoing a transformation, with the goal of concentrating on its core business: serving Veterans. Significant progress was made in 2012–13 toward a more modern organization, offering fast and easy access to benefits through more points of service. Other improvements include reducing bureaucracy and operational redundancy through the *Cutting Red Tape for Veterans* initiative. For example, the Department no longer requires applicants to provide receipts for health-related travel when they file a claim for reimbursement. Similarly, portions of the Veterans Independence Program are now paid as an up-front annual grant, instead of requiring Veterans to cover costs out of pocket and wait to be reimbursed.

In another move to provide faster and better service, the Department simplified its program policies—reducing 450 complex policies to just 200, and also making the text available online in a more user-friendly and searchable format (through the *Veterans Benefits Browser*[iii]). For example, the number of War Veterans Allowance policies was reduced from 110 to 14. This effort has proved valuable not only for those the Department serves, but also for employees and decision-makers.

Another highlight was a communications initiative. To help Veterans better understand the benefits and services available to them, the Department created several new information sources. These include e-tools such as the *Veterans Benefits Browser*[iv], *My VAC Book*[v], several mobile applications[vi], and significant changes to the *My VAC Account*[vii] option.

The new *Veterans Transition Action Plan*[viii] was also fully implemented in 2012–13. This plan included changes such as:

- Enhancements to the Department's service delivery;
- New opportunities for Veterans to begin post-military careers;
- Research into the needs of releasing Canadian Armed Forces personnel; and
- Strategies for building awareness of Veteran culture in the general public.

This plan also supported the Auditor General's recommendations (from its 2012 report) on helping injured military personnel to make the transition to civilian life.

Veterans Affairs Canada is a key contributor to government-wide initiatives to modernize and improve the public service in areas such as procurement, finance, and human resources. Close partnerships with other government organizations, such as Shared Services Canada, Service Canada and Public Works and Government Services Canada are proving valuable on this front.

Improving Service Delivery	**Ongoing since 2011**
Veterans expect easier access to programs, faster service and appropriate levels of support. Veterans Affairs Canada will take additional steps to respond to the diverse and changing needs of all Veterans over the coming years to provide them and their families with faster and easier access to benefits and services delivered by employees who are equipped to do their job and who understand the military culture.	**Contributing to:** Strategic Outcome 1 PA 1.1 PA 1.2 PA 1.3

Results Achieved

A major factor in getting decisions to Veterans faster is the electronic transfer of health records. During 2012-13, the health records of almost a thousand Canadian Armed Forces members were transmitted electronically from National Defence to Veterans Affairs Canada, eliminating the former manual process. The result is faster decisions.

The benefits of moving from paper-based processes to secure, electronic transactions and tools are being realized on several other fronts, including:

- More online, self serve options (e.g. *My VAC Account*[ix], *My VAC Book*[x]), which allow Veterans to apply for disability benefits online, track the status of their applications, communicate with the Department and find information on benefits and services;
- Tools such as *PTSD Coach Canada*[xi], which helps Veterans and their families manage symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, and OSI Connect[xii], a free mental health learning and self-management mobile app developed during 2012-13;
- The new *Veterans Benefits Browser*[xiii], which provides information to Veterans about benefits and services available to them;
- Electronic scanning of 6.6 million pages of Veterans' military service and health records requested from Library and Archives Canada and the RCMP; and
- A new centralized mail system (being phased in, in partnership with Public Works and Government Services Canada) which allows scanning and digital distribution of incoming paper mail to employees who need it to quickly provide service to Veterans—all while ensuring only those employees who need to know the information have access.

Through two further initiatives implemented in January 2013 (further to the 2012 Budget) the Department further simplified its operations:

- Veterans Independence Program recipients began receiving an annual grant, providing up-front payments, for their housekeeping costs and grounds maintenance expenses. This approach saves them being out of pocket, while they wait for reimbursement.
- The elimination of overlapping health care and career programs between National Defence and Veterans Affairs Canada cuts down on confusion among still-serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces and sharpened Veterans Affairs Canada's focus on Veterans.

Front-line staff now have increased delegated authority to make decisions in several areas, such as the Rehabilitation Program and the Treatment Benefits Program. Eliminating layers of approval means that recipients get decisions faster, and can access the services and benefits they need in a shorter time.

Support for Veterans with complex needs was enhanced by improving the Department's case management capacity. Case managers at Veterans Affairs Canada provide holistic assessment and case planning services for Veterans who are at risk and/or have complex health needs. The case manager

conducts a comprehensive assessment in the Veteran's home when needed. This is followed by development of a case plan with the Veteran to ensure that services and supports are in place to meet the medical and overall health needs. The case plan is goal-oriented, focused on overall health and wellness of the Veteran, and draws upon available services from federal, provincial and community levels.

Key activities from the National Case Management Learning Strategy implemented in 2012-13 included training for staff in areas such as addictions, applied suicide intervention, operational stress Injuries, and rehabilitation. Several new case management tools and resources were also launched to improve the quality of service to Veterans, such as a national inventory of addictions services and resources, training resources, the earnings loss benefits calculator, workload intensity tools, and updated guidelines and protocols.

An innovative partnership with Service Canada—the government's one-stop shop for information and services—was implemented in July 2012, expanding Veterans Affairs Canada's points of service from some 60 sites to 600. This follows the broader government vision of a simpler way for people to access government services.

Veterans Affairs Canada's private-sector partnerships were expanded to include:

- The Veterans Transition Advisory Council, which was created by the True Patriot Love Foundation and is made up of representatives from leading national companies. It provides recommendations to industry and the Government of Canada (through the Minister of Veterans Affairs) on ways to improve the transition process for service personnel from military to civilian employment. The council held its first meeting in January, 2013, and has been meeting regularly since.
- The web-based Helmets to Hardhats[xiv] program, a partnership with the construction sector and trade unions, launched in partnership with Veterans Affairs Canada in September 2012, which offers Veterans access to jobs in the construction trades. The site allows employers to advertise job opportunities in the trades, and Veterans to apply for jobs. By March 2013, more than 870 Veterans and 48 employers had registered for the program.
- The Hire a Veteran[xv] initiative, a partnership between Veterans Affairs Canada, corporate Canada, and local businesses. Partners are encouraged to give hiring priority to Veterans when they are equally qualified for job openings, and to provide Veterans Affairs Canada with information on their job openings and hiring targets so that Veterans can be made aware of new opportunities. As a result of this initiative, more than 2,400 jobs in Canada have been brought to the attention of job-seeking Veterans. To date, 76 employers are actively supporting this initiative and the number continues to grow.

Other partnerships were forged in 2012-13 to improve services for Veterans and their families with organizations such as Canadian National Rail, Saint John's Ambulance, University of British Columbia, and Queen's University.

Transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital	**Ongoing since 2009**
It has been a long-standing policy of the Government of Canada to transfer Veterans hospitals to the provinces. In 1963, the Glassco Commission completed a study and recommended to Cabinet that departmentally operated hospitals be transferred to the provinces. In response, all hospitals owned by Veterans Affairs Canada were transferred to the provinces with the exception of Ste. Anne's Hospital in Quebec. There is a declining demand for long-term care beds for traditional Veterans at the Hospital. Transferring Ste. Anne's to the Government of Quebec will ensure that Veterans continue to be cared for, maximize the Hospital's expertise in geriatrics and psycho-geriatrics, and increase bed availability for other Canadians in need.	**Contributing to:** Strategic Outcome 1 Program Activity 1.3
Results Achieved Negotiations to transfer Ste. Anne's to the government of Quebec are ongoing. A new phase of negotiations began in April 2012, when the governments of Canada and Quebec signed an agreement in principle. Both parties are finalizing detailed agreements related to the specific terms and conditions of the transfer. The Minister of Veterans Affairs, the Chief Negotiator and the Executive Director of Ste. Anne's Hospital have met with Veterans, hospital employees, and key stakeholders on several occasions to provide updates on the hospital's future. Regular consultations with employee unions are also held. These meetings will continue until the hospital is successfully transferred. Our Government's priority is to ensure that our Veterans have priority access to Ste. Anne's Hospital and to exceptional care and services in the official language of their choice. Under no circumstance will we compromise the level of care provided to Veterans. We will protect the interests of the Hospital's employees.	

Workplace Renewal	**New in 2012-13**
Veterans Affairs Canada is in the midst of a period of significant change to ensure the workforce meets Veterans needs. In order to ensure its success, the Department must create a work environment that encourages and supports employees while ensuring that its workforce is properly aligned with Veteran demographics. The Department will also work to enhance opportunities for Veterans to obtain positions in the Public Service.	**Contributing to:** All strategic outcomes Program Activity 4.1 Internal Services

Results Achieved

The focus of the Department's workplace renewal, including internal service improvements, was to enhance service for Veterans. A continuing priority in 2012–13 was to enrich the exposure to and understanding of military culture among Veterans Affairs Canada staff so they can serve Veterans better. Military service is considered an asset in the hiring process. A staff survey in March 2013 showed that the Department employed at least 115 Veterans, and a further 141 employees with a family member who has served in the Canadian Armed Forces. This effort fosters a workforce that is better able to understand, and ultimately serve, Canadian Veterans.

To keep pace with the changing makeup of the Canadian Veteran community, a variety of initiatives were designed to support and renew the workplace. 2012-13 highlights included:

- In April 2012, the Department launched its *Code of Conduct*, which guides employees and sets out the workplace values they can expect.
- The Department's Human Resources Corporate Services Branch was reorganized in April 2012 to achieve efficiencies and to better support the organization. Similar realignments took place throughout the Department with the goal of ensuring staff have the right skill sets and are located where most needed.
- The Department's 2012 National Learning Strategy focused on commitments made to support transformation, and to position the Department for the challenges of the future—helping to ensure that Canadian Veterans get the best service possible, now and into the future.
- Phase III of the online Human Resources Toolbox was launched in June 2012, giving employees easier access to self-serve information and resources—helping reduce time spent on administrative tasks in favour of serving Veterans.
- In October 2012, the *Official Languages Action Plan 2012-2015* was launched, followed by the *Second Language Learning Strategy for Veterans Affairs Canada*, both of which support efforts to ensure Veterans continue to receive high quality service in their language of choice.
- A new Two-way Generational Mentoring Program pilot was introduced in January 2013, linking departmental leaders together to benefit Veterans and Canadians.
- Training related to change management was made available to departmental staff. Examples include an "Every Day Skills" workshop (attended by 83% of employees) and a "Supporting Your People Through Change" workshop (attended by 71% of managers).
- Customized risk management training was developed for field staff.

In May 2012, the Department launched its Privacy Action Plan 2.0 as part of ongoing efforts to strengthen the protection of personal information. Key elements of the plan were fully implemented by October 2012. The Office of the Privacy Commissioner released the findings of its Audit Report on Veterans Affairs Canada[xvi] in October 2012. The report acknowledged the Department's significant progress, and offered some recommendations to further enhance privacy practices and processes. The Department has acted to address all of the report's 13 recommendations.

Office of the Veterans Ombudsman - Advance the fair treatment of the Veteran community and to uphold the rights articulated in the *Veterans Bill of Rights*	**Ongoing since 2009**
Parliamentarians and Canadians firmly believe that Canada has the obligation to provide the very best support to the men and women who put their lives at risk defending our country and the values that we hold dear. As such, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman is committed to act to ensure the fair treatment of all Veterans, those still in uniform and their families who are entitled to receive from Canada compensation and/or services for serving our country. The Office views fairness as an outcome that can be objectively measured in terms of the adequacy, sufficiency and accessibility of the benefits and services in place to address their needs.	**Contributing to:** Strategic Outcome 3 Program Activity 3.1 Veterans Ombudsman

Results Achieved

In 2012-13, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman continued to provide direct assistance through early intervention activities to ensure complaints, requests for information, and referrals were resolved in a timely and appropriate manner. The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman addressed and closed nearly 2,000 cases; initiated and investigated several systemic issues; and released the following reports:

Honouring and Connecting with Canada's Veterans: A National Veterans Identification [xvii](October 2012)
Veterans' Right to Disclosure - A Matter of Procedural Fairness[xviii] (November 2012)
Improving the New Veterans Charter: The Parliamentary Review [xix](January 2013)

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman also followed up on recommendations it had made in previous reports, and was in the final stage of reviewing program areas such as Long Term Care, the Veterans Independence Program, Assisted Living, and RCMP support programs.

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman engaged Veterans and other stakeholders to inform and educate them on issues of concern and emerging priorities through:

- Holding town hall meetings across Canada;
- Attending events across the country;
- Appearing before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs;
- Briefing Parliamentarians;
- Meeting with Veterans, serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces, RCMP and other interested parties; and
- Engaging Canadians both through traditional media and online social media.

In July 2012, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman established a Veterans Ombudsman's Working Group on RCMP/Veterans Affairs Canada Pension Benefits and Services to examine the impact of benefits administered by the Department for the RCMP (both serving and discharged members).

The Ombudsman met twice with his Veterans Ombudsman Advisory Council in 2012-13 and consulted with them on several issues the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman is reviewing. The Advisory Council is comprised of Veterans' representatives, professional advisors from academia, health care, rehabilitation and other fields as well as affiliated members with varied areas of expertise.

Risk Analysis

Operating Environment

Veterans Affairs Canada continues to modernize the delivery of its programs and services, in response to the changing needs and expectations of Veterans. The Department's Integrated Risk Management practices will help staff to manage this significant transformation. In 2012-13, the Department's risk management accomplishments included:

- Providing advice and guidance to staff in managing risks;
- Considering risk management in all departmental planning and reporting activities;
- Identifying risks through consultations with senior management and staff; and
- Monitoring risks and updating senior management regularly.

Change Management

One of the key risks managed was the Department's ability to adapt to the significant changes occurring with the implementation of the Department's modernization and service delivery improvements. To help mitigate this risk, the Department engaged external experts to conduct a change management benchmark assessment of the Department, and to develop a stronger strategy to support staff through the process. This will improve employee understanding of the Department's transformation, their engagement with middle and senior management, as well as their confidence in senior management.

Programs and Service Delivery

The makeup of the Veteran community is continually changing. The Department continues to monitor any risks of misalignment that may arise between its programs and services and the evolving needs of Veterans and their families. Ongoing analysis of data from the *2010 Life after Service Study* has helped identify emerging policy issues, and provided responses to specific research questions in support of new program and policy development. The *2013 Life after Service Study* will allow an examination of the well-being and income of released Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and a comparison of the results for Regular and Reserve Force Veterans.

Ste. Anne's Hospital Transfer

In the matter of the transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital to the Government of Quebec, Veterans Affairs Canada will mitigate any risks that would affect the quality and continuity of care. Strategies are in place to ensure that Veterans have continued priority access to the hospital's services and receive the same excellent standard of care.

The following table includes the top three risks identified for 2012-13, which were actively managed and mitigated.

Risk	Risk Response Strategy	Link to Program Alignment Architecture	Link to Organizational Priorities
Change Management Given the vast improvements underway, there was a risk that Veterans Affairs Canada may not manage the significant changes required in the areas of systems, people, processes, information and culture in an integrated and timely manner.	• Managed change by implementing a support system for employees. • Redirected resources to support the changing organization. • Strengthened governance structures to allow senior management the oversight necessary to support sound decision-making. • Improved communication, to make sure that all messaging about the transformation is clear and consistent. • Gave employees the right opportunities for training and skills development.	All strategic outcomes and program activities	• Modernization of the Department • Improving Service Delivery • Workplace Renewal
Programs and Service Delivery There was a risk that the modernization of Veterans Affairs Canada's service delivery model would not be achieved as expected and would not meet the needs of Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members, and their families.	• Monitored and analyzed information to stay on top of forecasted demographic changes, and make policy and program delivery adjustments as necessary. • Continued outreach to strengthen relations with Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members, and other stakeholders, to get accurate information about how the Department can meet their needs. • Worked with Veterans' organizations to better understand how best to honour and serve Veterans and their families. • Enhanced strategic partnerships with the Department of National Defence and others to ensure the seamless provision of benefits and services. • Trained employees and introduced new technology to assist with knowledge transfer and performance management.	Strategic Outcome 1 and PA 1.1, 1.2 & 1.3	• Modernization of the Department • Improving Service Delivery • Workplace Renewal
Ste. Anne's Hospital Transfer There was a risk that the successful transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital to the province of Québec may not occur in a timely manner.	• Ensured that Veterans continue to receive priority access to a high level of care. • Communicated/consulted regularly with all stakeholders including Veterans and their families, employees, and unions. • Ensured appropriate coverage by professional medical staff during transition.	Strategic Outcome 1 and PA 1.3	• Transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital

Summary of Performance

Financial Resources

	2012-13 ($ millions)				
	Main Estimates	Total Authorities*	Planned Spending	Actual Spending	Difference
Veterans Affairs Canada	3,562.2	3,653.0	3,562.1	3,481.2	80.9
Office of Veterans Ombudsman	5.9	6.2	5.9	5.1	0.8
Departmental Total	**3,568.0**	**3,659.2**	**3,568.0**	**3,486.3**	**81.7**

Source: Veterans Affairs Canada Finance Division. Totals may not add to exactly 100%, due to rounding.

** The "Total Authorities" include the Main Estimates and Supplementary Estimates approved by Treasury Board during 2012–13.*

Human Resources

	2012-13 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)		
	Planned	Actual	Difference
Veterans Affairs Canada	3,461	3,328	133
Office of Veterans Ombudsman	40	44	(4)
Departmental Total	**3,501**	**3,372**	**129**

Source: Veterans Affairs Canada Integrated Corporate Management Division

The Department's actual spending for 2012-13 was more than $3,486 million, which represents 97.8% of the total planned spending of $3,568 million reported in the *2012-13 Report on Plans and Priorities*. That figure included:

- $3,216 million which flowed directly to Veterans or supported the delivery of Veterans programs. This includes grants, contributions, health and vocational rehabilitation services, and other goods and services purchased on behalf of Veterans (i.e. prescription drugs, long-term care, etc.). Actual expenditures were $3,120 million, or 97% of the planned budget. Overall, the variance reflects the slight shifts in program demand, which is a function of the changing demographic profile and needs of the people the Department serves.
- $352 million allocated to salaries, operating expenditures, employee benefit plans, and the operation of Ste. Anne's Hospital. Actual expenditures were $366 million. The variance can be attributed to additional funding from the Department's operating budget carried forward from 2011-12, plus additional funding from Treasury Board for collective bargaining.

The number of departmental FTEs has been declining since 2010-11. This is consistent with the Department's five-year transformation plan to improve efficiencies and promote a high performance workplace. The breakdown above for 2012-13 represents one year of reductions toward a total target of approximately 800 fewer FTEs by 2015-16.

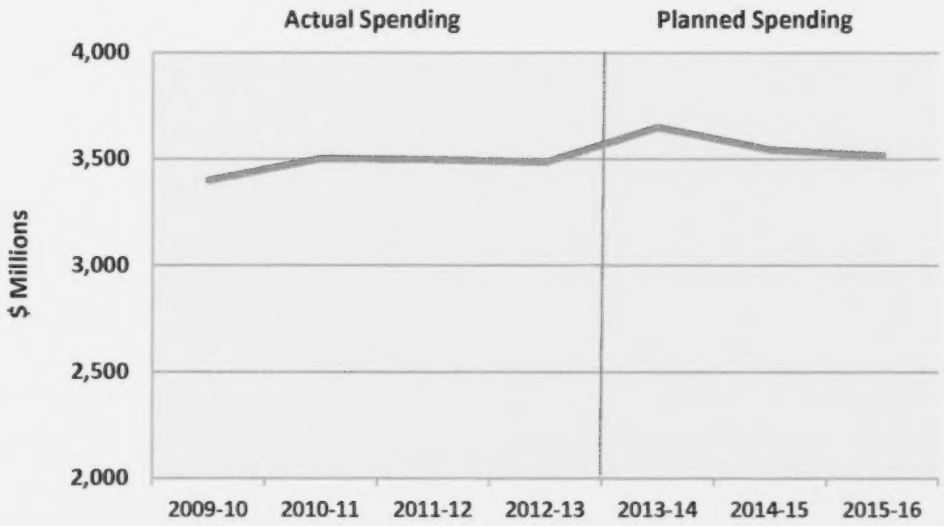
Performance Summary Table for Strategic Outcomes and Programs

($ millions)	Main Estimates 2012-13	Planned Spending			Total Authorities 2012-13	Actual Spending			Alignment to Government of Canada Outcomes
		2012-13	2013-14	2014-15		2012-13	2011-12*	2010-11*	
Strategic Outcome 1: Financial, physical and mental well being of eligible Veterans									
1.1 Disability and Death Compensation	2,244.5	2,244.5	2,220.9	2,183.4	2,250.9	2,141.8			Income Security and Employment for Canadians
1.2 Financial Support Program	99.8	99.8	157.0	174.2	123.0	120.4			Income Security and Employment for Canadians
1.3 Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services	1,100.1	1,100.0	1,152.2	1080.1	1,148.8	1,095.6			Healthy Canadians
TOTAL SO 1	**3,444.4**	**3,444.3**	**3,530.2**	**3,437.7**	**3,522.7**	**3,357.8**	**3,367.6**	**3,376.0**	
Strategic Outcome 2: Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace									
2.1 Canada Remembers Program	47.4	47.4	43.4	40.6	49.6	43.0	42.9	40.6	A Vibrant Canadian Culture and Heritage
TOTAL SO 2	**47.4**	**47.4**	**43.4**	**40.6**	**49.6**	**43.0**	**42.9**	**40.6**	
Strategic Outcome 3: Veterans rights to services and benefits that address their needs are considered in an independent and impartial way									
3.1 Veterans Ombudsman	5.9	5.9	6.1	5.8	6.2	5.1	5.6	4.9	Income Security and Employment for Canadians
Total SO 3	**5.9**	**5.9**	**6.1**	**5.8**	**6.2**	**5.1**	**5.6**	**4.9**	
Program Activity Supporting all Strategic Outcomes									
4.1 Internal Services	70.4	70.4	70.0	60.1	80.7	80.4	81.0	81.8	
Total for Internal Services	**70.4**	**70.4**	**70.0**	**60.1**	**80.7**	**80.4**	**81.0**	**81.8**	
Strategic Outcomes and Internal Services	**3,568.0**	**3,568.0**	**3,649.7**	**3,544.2**	**3,659.2**	**3,486.3**	**3,497.1**	**3,503.3**	

**Because of changes to the Department's Program Alignment Architecture (PAA) structure, expenditures for Strategic Outcome 1 cannot be allocated at the Program level for 2010-11 and 2011-12.*

Expenditure Profile

Departmental Spending Trend



Total spending for 2012-13 for Veterans Affairs Canada was $3,486.3 million; a slight decrease of 0.3% from 2011-12 when total spending was $3,497.1 million. This decrease in overall spending can be mainly attributed to the reduction in traditional war service Veterans accessing the Department's traditional programs.

Operating expenditures also decreased by $64 million in comparison to 2011-12 as a result of several factors such as the *Cutting Red Tape for Veterans* initiative, the implementation of Budget 2012 decisions, and the conclusion of ex gratia payments related to the health effects of Agent Orange use at Canadian Armed Forces Base Gagetown.

Planned spending is expected to increase slightly in 2013-14 before dropping again in the following two years. It is important to note that these anticipated decreases in no way reflect cuts to benefits or services for Veterans. Rather, the anticipated reductions are related to Veterans numbers falling, combined with a more efficient use of technology in departmental operations.

Estimates by Vote

For information on Veterans Affairs Canada's organizational Votes and/or statutory expenditures, please see the Public Accounts of Canada 2013 (Volume II)[xx]. An electronic version of the Public Accounts 2013 is available on the Public Works and Government Services Canada website.

Contribution to the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy

The Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS) outlines the Government of Canada's commitment to improving the transparency of environmental decision-making by articulating its key strategic environmental goals and targets.

Veterans Affairs Canada ensures that consideration of these outcomes is an integral part of its decision-making processes. The Department contributes to Theme IV of the FSDS (denoted by the visual identifier and associated program below) in the following target areas: Green Buildings; Surplus Electronic and Electrical Equipment; Printing Unit Reduction; Paper Consumption; Green Meetings, and Green Procurement.

For additional details on Veterans Affairs Canada's Greening Government Operations activities please see the Supplementary Information Tables.

Section II: Analysis of Programs and Sub-Programs by Strategic Outcomes

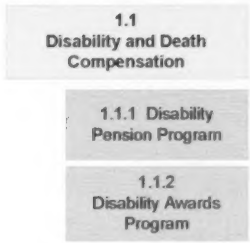
Strategic Outcomes

Strategic Outcome 1: Financial, physical and mental well-being of eligible Veterans		
Performance Indicators	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
% of eligible Canadian Regular Force Veterans with family incomes which fall below the Low Income Measure	The rate of low income among eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans will not exceed that of the Canadian population	Surpassed target: 97% of eligible Canadian Regular Force Veterans have family incomes above the Low Income Measure, compared to 92% in the general Canadian population. 89% of eligible non-working Canadian Armed Forces Veteran have family incomes above the Low Income Measure , compared to 69% of non-working Canadians[1]
Comparison of the mortality rate of Canadian Regular Force Veterans with the general Canadian population	The mortality rate of Canadian Armed Forces Veterans will not exceed that of the Canadian population	Surpassed Target: 23% less than the age-sex standardized rate for the general population[2]
% of eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans who report they are "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their life in general	The rates of life satisfaction among eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans will be comparable to the Canadian population	81%[3] compared to 91%[4] in the general Canadian Population (age and sex standardized data)[5]
Strategic Outcome 2: Canadians remember and demonstrate their recognition of all who served in Canada's efforts during war, military conflict and peace		
Performance Indicators	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
% of Canadians who participate in remembrance activities	35%	35%[6]
Strategic Outcome 3: Veterans rights to services and benefits that address their needs are considered in an independent and impartial way		
Performance Indicators	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Percentage of Veterans and other individuals who feel that the Ombudsman has raised issues, which ensure fair and equitable treatment by the Department	80%	Unable to assess, a survey was conducted in the spring of 2013 and results are not yet published

[1] 2010 Transition to Civilian Life Survey
[2] 2010 Canadian Forces Cancer and Mortality Study
[3] 2010 National Client Survey
[4] 2010 Transition to Civilian Life
[5] The Survey on Transition to Civilian Life released by Veterans Affairs Canada in January 2011 demonstrated that people with fewer chronic health and disability problems report greater life satisfaction than those with more problems. Only about 10% of Canadian Armed Forces Veterans need support from Veterans Affairs Canada. Nearly all (98%) of the Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans served by Veterans Affairs Canada are in receipt of a disability benefit related to chronic physical and/or mental problems, and it can be expected that their life satisfaction will be lower than that of the general Canadian population.
[6] Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week 2012 Survey

Programs and Sub-Programs

Program 1.1 – Disability and Death Compensation



This program supports eligible Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and members, survivors, spouses/common-law partners, dependents and civilians whose lives have been permanently affected as a result of service to their country. In recognition of the effects of service-related disabilities or death, compensation is provided in the form of monthly disability pensions, lump sum disability awards and monthly allowances. The amount of benefit awarded is dependent on the severity of the disability and its impact on daily functioning. This activity is delivered through grants.

Financial Resources ($ millions)					Human Resources (FTEs)		
Main Estimates 2012-13	Total Authorities 2012-13	Planned Spending 2012-13	Actual Spending 2012-13	Difference	Planned 2012-13	Actual 2012-13	Difference
2,244.5	2,250.9	2,244.5	2,141.8	102.7	824.0	780.0	44.0

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans feel the effects of their service related disability have been recognized	% of eligible Veterans who feel the disability benefits they have received from Veterans Affairs Canada has recognized their service-related disability	65%	74%[7]
Eligible Veterans receive compensation in recognition of the effects of service-related disabilities or death	Total number of recipients of disability and/or death compensation and the dollar value of the compensation	As required	185,411 recipients of Disability Benefits received a total of $2,062.2 million in benefits as of March 2013

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Overall, expenditures were $102.7 million less than planned, both disability pensions (fewer traditional Veterans) and disability awards (actual number of applicants was less than expected) being lower than anticipated.

Work on redesigning the first application process for disability benefits was advanced so that Veterans, serving Canadian Armed Forces personnel, the RCMP, and their families now:

- Receive decisions faster;

[7] 2010 National Client Survey

- Have access to an expanded network of support;
- Have more direct access to decision-makers;
- Can take advantage of more on-line, self-serve options; and
- Have more access to clear, easy-to-understand information.

Veterans Affairs Canada launched additional work to improve decision wait times. In addition to continuing to simplify disability benefit application packages, other initiatives included:

- Accelerating the digitization of service and health records held by the Department of National Defence, Library and Archives Canada, and the RCMP;
- Phasing in a system of centralized mail; and
- Fast tracking applications for specific medical conditions.

In March 2013, the Department completed its Policy Renewal project. Program policies were simplified and modernized in a more user-friendly and searchable format. As a result, 450 program policies were reduced to approximately 200. For example, the number of War Veterans Allowance policies was reduced from 110 to just 14. These renewed policies are being made available publicly through the *Veterans Benefits Browser* [xxi] on the Department's website.

In support of evidence and research based policy making, the Minister of Veterans Affairs' Scientific Advisory Committee met in Ottawa in August, 2012 and February, 2013 and held nine meetings by teleconference in 2012-13. Secretariat support for the committee is provided by the Department's Research Directorate.

The Department met or exceeded its published service standards for disability benefit decisions in 2012-13:

- 80% of first applications were processed within 16 weeks of receiving all information in support of the application;
- 83% of reassessments were processed within 16 weeks of receiving all information in support of the application; and,
- 81% of departmental reviews were processed within 12 weeks of receiving new or additional information in support of the review.

Sub Program 1.1.1 - Disability Pension Program

This program recognizes and compensates eligible Veterans as well as Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans who applied for a disability pension prior to April 1, 2006, survivors, dependants and civilians for the effects of a service related disability and/or death. Compensation is provided in the form of a monthly disability pension.

Disability pensioners who are hospitalized or receiving outpatient care for their pensioned condition are eligible to receive an additional allowance for that period. This program also recognizes and compensates those in receipt of a disability pension for related clothing costs, personal care costs, and exceptional health needs. This sub program is delivered through monthly grants.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
1,716.2	1,674.5	41.7	412.0	390.0	22.0

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on disability pension applications	% of Disability Pension decisions rendered within 16 weeks of receiving all information in support of the application	80%	90%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Expenditures for Disability Pensions were less than planned, due to the declining number of traditional Veterans who are accessing this program.

Redesigning the Disability Benefit First Application Process

The first phase of redesigning the first application process for disability benefits was completed this year, which will help reduce the current processing time from 16 weeks to 12 weeks for 2013-14 from the time all information in support of the application is received by the Department. Some of the first phase initiatives included:

- More on-line, self serve options making it easier for Veterans to apply for disability benefits online, track the status of their application, communicate with the Department, and find information on benefits and services;
- More front-end counselling for applicants;
- Simplified disability benefit application packages;
- Better communication between decision-makers and applicants: staff now contact applicants directly if any information is missing from an application; and
- More training for employees to guide them in the decision-making (adjudication) process, and better workload management systems.

Decision times for certain common medical conditions applications are shorter. For example, applications involving hearing loss or tinnitus (representing 40% of all first applications) are now typically processed within eight weeks.

Improving Technology

In 2012–13 the Department increased its use of technology to support disability pension applications. In partnership with PWGSC, a system of centralized mail is being implemented, which allows documents to be scanned, and transferred electronically. As well, partnerships with National Defence and the Canadian Armed Forces have reduced the Department's retrieval time for Veterans' service and health records. A significant number of Veterans' records have also been scanned. To date, 6.6 million pages have been digitized.

Improving disability letters

Over the same period, 41 form letters were rewritten in plain language. This move means that in 2012-13 approximately 51,000 applicants received decision letters (Disability and Treatment) that were easier to read and understand.

Sub Program 1.1.2 – Disability Awards Program

Under the Enhanced New Veterans Charter, this program recognizes and compensates eligible Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans, and in some cases surviving spouses/common-law partners and surviving dependent children, for death, detention and the non-economic effects of service-related disability including pain and suffering, functional loss and the effects of permanent impairment on the lives of Canadian Armed Forces members, Veterans and their families. Compensation is provided in the form of a lump-sum payment, annual payments over the number of years of the Veteran's choosing, or a combination of these two payment options. This activity is delivered through grants.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
528.3	467.4	60.9	412.0	390.0	22.0

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on applications for disability awards	% of Disability Award decisions rendered within 16 weeks of receiving all information in support of the application	80%	77% of decisions were made within 16 weeks of receiving all information in support of the application

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Expenditures for the Disability Award grant were less than planned, due to fewer applications than expected.

Efforts to reduce the turnaround time for decisions on disability benefit have improved both the Disability Pension Program and the Disability Awards Program. (Note: the Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned from the report on sub program 1.1.1 also apply to this sub program).

Program 1.2 – Financial Support Program

1.2 Financial Support Program

1.2.1 Financial Benefits

1.2.2 War Veterans Allowance

This program provides income support to eligible Veterans, qualified civilians and their survivors. The intent of the support is to ensure that recipients have income which is adequate to meet their basic needs. In recognition of the effects of war time service in the case of War Service Veterans, income support may be paid in the form of a monthly War Veterans Allowance. The program also provides economic support to Canadian Armed Forces Veterans, survivors, spouses/common-law partners and dependents for the economic impact that a career ending and/or service related injury or death can have on a Veteran's ability to earn income, advance in a career or save for retirement. Compensation is provided in the form of a monthly income support payment. A lump sum supplementary retirement benefit is available to those who are totally and permanently incapacitated. There is also an allowance available for those with severe and permanent impairments. This program is delivered through grants.

Financial Resources ($ millions)					Human Resources (FTEs)		
Main Estimates 2012-13	Total Authorities 2012-13	Planned Spending 2012-13	Actual Spending 2012-13	Difference	Planned 2012-13	Actual 2012-13	Difference
99.8	123.0	99.8	120.4	(20.6)	55.0	52.0	3.0

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
The income of eligible Veterans is sufficient to meet their basic needs	The percentage of earnings loss recipients whose family income falls below the low income measure	The rate of low income among earnings loss recipients will be comparable to the rate of low income for working Canadians	The number of Earnings Loss recipients who participated in the survey[8] is too small to report against. However, 6.6% of medically releasing Canadian Armed Forces Veterans (working and non-working) have family income below the national low income measure, compared to 7.6% for working Canadians. The difference is not statistically significant.

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Expenditures were more than planned due to higher expenditures for Financial Benefits, a result of discontinuing the disability offset for Earnings Loss, offset by lower expenditures for the War Veterans Allowance as the number of traditional Veterans declines.

[8] 2010 Survey on Transition to Civilian Life

Updating program arrangements

Veterans Affairs Canada worked with National Defence and its insurance arm, the Service Income Security Insurance Plan, to better reflect the obligations of all three parties and to coordinate, consult and share information to improve the transition process for all medically releasing Canadian Armed Forces members. Early progress has already been made, as evidenced in National Defence/Service Income Security Insurance Plan's recent alignment with the Department to end the deduction of disability pensions in the calculation of Earnings Loss and Canadian Forces Income Support benefits.

Promoting Enhancements of the Enhanced New Veterans Charter

A number of improvements were made to the New Veterans Charter in October, 2011. They included: establishing a minimum, pre-tax income of $40,000 a year (indexed to $42,426 in 2013) for Veterans receiving the Earnings Loss Benefit; expanding eligibility for the Permanent Impairment Allowance and the Exceptional Incapacity Allowance; introducing a new $1,000 monthly supplement (indexed to $1,047.53 in 2013) to the Permanent Impairment Allowance to help our most seriously injured or ill Veterans who are unable to be suitably, gainfully employed; and creating new payment options for the Disability Award.

Veterans Affairs Canada promoted greater awareness of these changes in 2012-13 by reaching out to Veterans who may be eligible for the enhanced benefits. This was accomplished through seminars and presentations to Canadian Armed Forces personnel and by sharing information with releasing members during transition interviews.

Sub Program 1.2.1 – Financial Benefits

The program provides economic support to eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans, survivors, spouses/common-law partners and dependents for the economic impact that a career ending and/or service related injury or death can have on a Veteran's ability to earn income, advance in a career or save for retirement. Support is provided to those approved for the Rehabilitation program; those who have completed the program and have not yet found employment; those who were eligible for the program but are unable to participate due to permanent and severe impairment; and those who have received a Disability Award for a physical or mental condition which causes permanent and severe impairments for which Rehabilitation services have been approved. Compensation is provided in the form of monthly income support payments. A supplementary retirement benefit is available for those who were totally and permanently incapacitated. This program is delivered through grants.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
88.1	109.6	(21.5)	46.8	44.2	2.6

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans and other individuals are able to fund their basic needs	% of program recipients who report their financial situation is sufficient to meet their basic living expenses	70%	92%[9]

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Expenditures for the Earnings Loss grant were more than planned due to the discontinuation of the offset. The *Canadian Forces Members and Veterans Re-establishment and Compensation Regulations* were amended to end the deduction of disability pensions in the calculation of the Department's Earnings Loss and Canadian Forces Income Support benefits as of October 1, 2012, ensuring that these benefits are consistent with the National Defence's Service Income Security Insurance Plan Long Term Disability policy.

[9] 2010 National Client Survey

Sub Program 1.2.2 – War Veterans Allowance

This program is a form of financial assistance available to eligible Veterans, Merchant Navy Veterans, qualified civilians and their survivors, dependants and orphans. In recognition of war service, qualified persons are provided with a regular, monthly income to meet basic needs. Eligibility for War Veterans Allowance is determined by the wartime service of a Veteran or qualified civilian, age or health, family income and residency. As well, a surviving spouse, a surviving common-law partner or orphan may qualify for WVA. WVA recipients must report all sources of income on an annual basis or as changes in income occur. War Veterans Allowance recipients are also eligible to receive financial assistance for emergencies or unexpected contingencies through the Assistance Fund. This activity is delivered through grants.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
11.7	10.8	0.9	8.3	7.8	0.5

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans and their survivors receive timely decisions on applications for War Veterans Allowance	% of War Veterans Allowance decisions rendered within 4 weeks of receiving all information in support of the application or request for review	80%	95%

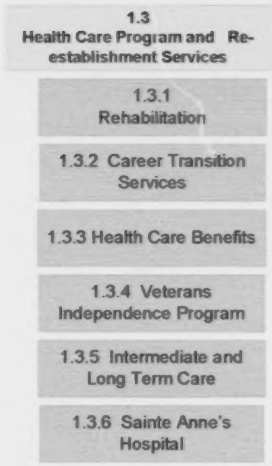
Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Expenditures for the War Veterans Allowance grant were less than planned because the number of traditional Veterans is declining.

The decision to end the deduction of Disability pension payments from the War Veterans Allowance is having a positive impact on Veterans and their families. In all:

- Approximately 3,000 Veterans and survivors are expected to qualify for monthly WVA benefit payments for the first time, including 700 who gain access to related benefits (treatment and Veterans Independence Program services) for the first time;
- More than 2,000 Veterans in long-term care are expected to receive a higher subsidy toward their accommodation and meals fees; and
- 200 Veterans and survivors are expected to receive increased payments.

Program 1.3 – Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services



This program is designed to maintain or enhance the physical, mental and social well-being of eligible Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members, civilians, and their survivors and dependants and other individuals, promote independence, and assist in keeping them at home and in their own communities by providing a continuum of care. The program provides access to employment support, health benefits, home care and long-term care. The activity is delivered through operating funds and contributions.

Financial Resources ($ millions)					Human Resources (FTEs)		
Main Estimates 2012-13	Total Authorities 2012-13	Planned Spending 2012-13	Actual Spending 2012-13	Difference	Planned 2012-13	Actual 2012-13	Difference
1,100.1	1,148.8	1,100.0	1,095.6	4.4	1,775.0	1,693.0	82.0

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans are able to remain in their own homes and communities	The percentage of community dwelling Veterans in receipt of the Veterans Independence Program who are admitted to a long-term care facility during the fiscal year	< 10%	Surpassed target: only 4.2% of Veterans who live in their communities and received Veterans Independence Program were admitted to a long term care facility during the fiscal year.
Payments for health care/treatment benefits are processed in a timely and efficient manner	The percentage of payments processed for health care benefits which are paid directly to service providers	70%	Surpassed target: 98% of payments were paid directly to service providers.
Eligible Veterans actively participate in the civilian workforce	The percentage of eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans who are unemployed	The unemployment rate of Canadian Armed Forces Veterans will not exceed that of the Canadian population	In 2010, the unemployment rate of working age eligible Canadian Armed Forces Veterans was 7.4 %. The unemployment rate of Canadians was 7.3% (age and sex standardized data). The difference is not statistically significant.[10]

[10] 2010 Transition to Civilian Life Survey

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Veterans Affairs Canada's redesign of its business processes in 2012-13 meant that Veterans and their families receive more efficient service:

- 47,000 Veterans Independence Program recipients have chosen the new option of payment by direct deposit;
- Decisions regarding Veterans Independence Program benefits and services no longer go through several layers of approval;
- Case managers now have decision-making authority for services funded by the Rehabilitation Program; and
- The Department continues to review all correspondence, including official decision letters, and rewrite them in plain language to ensure they are complete and easy to understand.

Veterans Affairs Canada, in partnership with the Canadian Armed Forces, continues to strengthen its commitment to improving the care for all injured or sick Forces members and their families through effective casualty management, early intervention, and a seamless transition from the Canadian Armed Forces to Veterans Affairs Canada.

The new *Veterans Transition Action Plan* helps ensure Veterans and releasing Canadian Armed Forces personnel understand and access the services and benefits available to them. It also guides the Department in its ongoing development of effective programs and policies.

In 2012-13, the Department improved services for Veterans by increasing its use of technology through:

- scanning Veterans' military service and health records;
- Providing more on-line, self serve options such as the Benefits Browser;
- Giving Veterans and their families the ability to create personalized booklets with information about Veterans Affairs Canada services and benefits;
- Providing easy access to information about services and benefits through the free *Veterans Matter* mobile application; and
- Giving Veterans the opportunity to test the new *PTSD Coach Canada* mobile application which complements the work of mental health providers.

As well, the Department completed its Policy Renewal project. Health Care Program and Re-establishment Services policies were simplified and modernized—both to better support internal decision-making, and to improve the quality and timeliness of service to Veterans.

Sub Program 1.3.1 - Rehabilitation

This program provides needs-based access to medical, psycho social and vocational rehabilitation and assistance services to eligible Canadian Armed Force Veterans who have been medically released, or who have rehabilitation needs primarily related to service, to assist them and their families to re-establish in civilian life. The intent of this program is the restoration of functioning in the following areas: physical health, psychological and social function, employability and quality of life. The Rehabilitation program is delivered through a case management process, and eligible participants access services and benefits through community based providers. Under certain circumstances, survivors and spouses of eligible Veterans may be eligible to receive vocational assistance services and rehabilitation services. This program is neither a grant nor a contribution. Rather, expenses are funded through operating funds.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
19.5	22.0	(2.5)	39.0	35.7	3.3

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on applications for the Rehabilitation and Vocational Assistance Program	% of rehabilitation program eligibility decisions rendered within 2 weeks of receiving all information in support of the application	80%	85%
Eligible Veterans have the knowledge, skills and abilities to achieve an appropriate occupational goal	% of eligible Veterans for whom a closure report was submitted who successfully completed one or more training programs included as part of their vocational rehabilitation plan	70%	69%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Rehabilitation expenditures were higher than planned due to greater than expected use of Rehabilitation services.

The Rehabilitation program is delivered through a case management process. The Department allocated case management resources to where they are most needed to support Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and their families across the nation. Case managers provide case management services to Canadian Armed Forces Veterans, working within an interdisciplinary team. Case managers now have

decision-making authority for services funded by the Rehabilitation Program. The service standard for rehabilitation program eligibility decisions of 14 days was maintained for 2012-13.
Veterans Affairs Canada is working to strengthen front-line staff knowledge of the Rehabilitation Program. Phase I Rehabilitation training modules were developed and will be delivered during 2013-14.

A National Case Management Learning Strategy was implemented in 2012-13. Key learning activities included:

- Addictions Training;
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training;
- Webinar series on Families and Operational Stress Injuries;
- Orientation to Rehabilitation;
- Financial Benefits Information Sessions; and
- Workload Intensity Tools Training.

The Department developed new service standards relating to the delivery of the Rehabilitation Program so that Veterans have a clear understanding of what they can expect. These service standards will be implemented and measured during 2013-14.

Led by the True Patriot Love Foundation, the Veterans Transition Advisory Council was established to help raise awareness of the skill sets Veterans have to offer the private sector. The council represents a team of corporate champions committed to removing the barriers that Veterans face during the transition to civilian employment.

The Department also announced its support of up to $600,000 over four years to the Veterans Transition Program, a University of British Columbia group-based therapy program for Veterans.

Sub Program 1.3.2 – Career Transition Services

The program supports the transition to civilian life of eligible Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans and survivors by providing access to services that will assist them in having the knowledge, skills and plan necessary to prepare for and obtain meaningful civilian employment. The provision of support is based on need for the services and contingent on the participant's ongoing involvement in developing and completing his or her career transition activities/plan. There are three components: workshops; individual career counseling; and job finding assistance. This program is delivered by a contracted national service provider, with policy guidance from Veterans Affairs Canada. This activity is funded using operating funds.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
3.1	1.9	1.2	9.7	8.9	0.8

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans receive timely decisions on applications for Career Transition Services	% of Career Transition eligibility decisions rendered within 4 weeks of receiving all information in support of the application	80%	99%
Eligible Veterans have the knowledge and skills necessary to obtain suitable civilian employment	% of program recipients who report they have a "good" or "very good" knowledge of interview techniques at the end of the Career Transition Workshop	80%	95%
	% program recipients who report being "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with the effectiveness of the Career Transition Workshops	80%	99%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Career Transition Services expenditures were $1.2 million less than planned due to the demand driven nature of the program. Positive results across all performance indicators suggests, however, that Canadian Veterans are receiving decisions on Career Transition Services applications quickly, and they are gaining the knowledge and skills they need to obtain suitable civilian employment.

The Department started the process of updating the Transition Interview tool, including: incorporating its risk tool which identifies potential reestablishment risk; reviewing the Transition Interview Manual to make it more applicable to the modern-day Veteran; and introducing *My VAC Account* and *Hire a Veteran* at the Transition Interview. *Hire a Veteran* is a partnership between Veterans Affairs Canada, corporate Canada and local businesses that assists Veterans of the Canadian Armed Forces transitioning from military careers to civilian careers in the private sector.

On January 1, 2013, Veterans Affairs Canada made changes to the Career Transition Services Program for released Canadian Armed Forces personnel (approximately 5,000 regular force and 5,000 primary reserve each year). With the goal of streamlining services by upgrading the service delivery model, the program now reimburses eligible Veterans and Survivors for career transition services, up to a lifetime maximum of $1,000 (including taxes). Veterans and Survivors can now choose the business or individual that best meets their individual needs. In the past, Veterans and Survivors were required to use one national provider.

Sub Program 1.3.3 – Health Care Benefits

In recognition of their service to the country, the program provides eligible Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans, civilians and other individuals with access to treatment benefits considered to be an appropriate response to their assessed health needs. This activity is delivered through operating funds.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
354.5	331.6	22.9	292.2	267.6	24.6

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans' needs for health care benefits are met	% of Veterans and other individuals who indicate that the Health Care Benefits Program meets their needs	80%	74%[11]

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Actual expenditures were less than anticipated, mostly due to the average costs of transactions being less than originally planned. In January 2013 new regulatory amendments eliminated duplication in the types of benefits and services offered to serving Canadian Armed Forces members. National Defence is now the sole provider of health care and career transition programs to still-serving members, while Veterans Affairs Canada continues to provide these services to eligible Veterans and survivors.

The Department streamlined approvals for certain benefits, removing the need to pre-authorize most high use/low cost items, such as medical supply benefits, and prosthetic/orthotic benefits. As well, for most (77%) treatment benefits, Veterans Affairs Canada no longer requires renewed approval to continue with the same benefits.

As a result of another *Cutting Red Tape for Veterans* initiative, Veterans no longer have to provide receipts for health-related travel when filing a claim for reimbursement. The receipts must still be kept for a year, in case the claim is reviewed; but streamlining the process has removed previous delays.

[11] 2010 National Client Survey

Sub Program 1.3.4 – Veterans Independence Program

This program provides funding to eligible Veterans, still serving Canadian Armed Forces disability pensioners, civilians, as well as survivors and primary caregivers so that they can access home and community care and support services to meet their physical, mental and social needs. This assistance allows them to remain healthy and independent in their own homes and communities. The services and benefits which may be funded include home care services and personal care (housekeeping, access to nutrition, grounds maintenance, ambulatory), home adaptations and transportation services. Veterans Independence Program housekeeping and/or grounds maintenance services are available to eligible survivors and primary caregivers. This activity is delivered through contributions and, starting on January 1, 2013, grants for housekeeping and/or grounds maintenance services only.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
352.3	372.2	(19.9)	428.6	392.5	36.1

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans' needs for home care and support are met	% of Veterans Independence Program recipients who report reliance on Veterans Independence Program to allow them to remain in their homes and communities	80%	92%
	% of Veterans and other individuals who report that the Veterans Independence Program meets their needs	80%	88%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Veterans Independence Program actual expenditures were more than anticipated, due to up-front payments for housekeeping and grounds maintenance, introduced in January 2013. The new grant payment method resulted in increased transition costs for the Department in the short term, while both systems operate at the same time. Both the contribution and grant systems will continue to operate in parallel until transition to the new grant system is complete.

In a phased-in approach, Veterans Independence Program recipients now receive an annual grant in advance, instead of having to wait for reimbursement. This eliminates cumbersome paperwork for Veterans, and puts money into their hands faster—while also eliminating 2.5 million transactions a year for Veterans, their families, and the Department.

Automatic mailing of Veterans Independence Program follow-up and survivor renewal forms started in October 2012 through a partnership with Canada Post. This ensures all Veterans and survivors benefiting from the program have an opportunity to connect with the Department at least once per year, updating their requirements, as appropriate.

The Department also re-engineered many of its internal processes, with the goal of improving its services to Veterans. Changes were made to improve the Department's relationship with its claims-processing contractor, to make the system more responsive. One major change is a revised annual follow up process that has the Department's third party contractor processing a high volume of low-risk, routine Veterans Independence Program review and renewal functions, allowing front line departmental staff to focus on the most complex cases.

Sub Program 1.3.5 – Intermediate and Long Term Care

The program supports eligible Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces Veterans and other individuals who require nursing home type care to meet their needs. The program works in cooperation with provincial agencies and long term care facilities to support eligible Veterans and other individuals in an appropriate long term care setting. This activity is delivered through operating funds and contributions.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
288.0	284.4	3.6	204.5	187.3	17.2

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans physical, mental and social needs are met in long term care facilities	% Veterans/ representatives who are "completely satisfied or mostly satisfied with the health professional staff in their long term care facility"	90%	98%[12]

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

According to Veterans Affairs Canada's Long-Term Care Client Satisfaction Survey, almost all (98%) Veterans in long-term care facilities reported that they are satisfied with the care they receive. As the population of traditional Veterans declines and those people choose to stay in facilities closer to their homes and families, the need for contract beds is diminishing. The Department is working with provincial and facility partners to address resulting bed vacancies.

Veterans Affairs Canada is also working to reduce complexity and simplify processes, with new application forms for long term care and new decision letters being developed. Additional measures will be introduced in 2013-14 to ensure timely decision making.

[12] Long Term Care Client Satisfaction Survey results for 2012-13

Sub Program 1.3.6 – Sainte Anne's Hospital

Sainte Anne's Hospital's supports eligible Veterans, Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans and civilians so that their physical, mental and social needs are met. The Hospital provides high quality long term and respite care services as well as a vast range of programs to eligible Veterans and civilians. Through its Day Centre, it is able to offer support services to those still residing in their communities and through the Ste-Anne's Centre, it provides mental health services to Canadian Armed Forces members and Veterans. This activity is delivered through operating funds.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
82.6	83.6	(1.0)	801.0	801.0	0

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Eligible Veterans are provided with long-term care and support services	% of patients who report they are very satisfied or satisfied on the satisfaction survey (global score)	80%	95%
	Rate of complaints	0.67 rate of complaint per 1000 patient days	0.22
	Accreditation award	Hospital will receive accreditation	Accreditation received

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Negotiations are ongoing to complete the transfer of Ste. Anne's Hospital to the Government of Quebec. The Department's goal is to make sure that Veterans continue to have priority access to the hospital, and continue to receive the same exceptional care and services in both official languages. An agreement in principle was signed in April 2012; both parties are now finalizing the details of the terms and conditions for the transfer.

Program 2.1 – Canada Remembers Program

2.1 Canada Remembers Program

2.1.1 Public Education and Awareness

2.1.2 Ceremonies and Events

2.1.3 Partnerships and Collaborations

2.1.4 Memorials and Cemetery Maintenance

2.1.5 Funeral and Burial Program

Canadian Veterans and those who died in service have made valuable contributions to the development of Canada. Under the authority of P.C. Order 1965-688 this program ensures that Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their sacrifices and achievements are preserved. Canada Remembers activities promote the following outcomes: Canadians are knowledgeable about their efforts; Veterans are publicly recognized for their service; communities and other groups lead remembrance activities; symbols erected to their memory are maintained in perpetuity; and, eligible Veterans receive dignified funerals and burials. Encouraging pride in our shared military history, celebrating the contributions and acknowledging the sacrifices of those who served, and preserving symbols to mark their courage all contribute to the Government of Canada's outcome of a vibrant Canadian culture and heritage. This program is delivered through grants, contributions and operating funds.

Financial Resources ($ millions)					Human Resources (FTEs)		
Main Estimates 2012-13	Total Authorities 2012-13	Planned Spending 2012-13	Actual Spending 2012-13	Difference	Planned 2012-13	Actual 2012-13	Difference
47.4	49.6	47.4	43.0	4.4	98.0	123.0	(25.0)

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Canadian Veterans and those who died in service are honoured and the memory of their achievements and sacrifices is preserved	The percentage of Canadian Veterans' overall satisfaction with how Veterans Affairs Canada delivers its remembrance programs	85%	88%[13]

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

The difference between planned versus actual FTEs used during the period was due to a reorganization which saw communications and administrative staff from other areas of the department report to this program area.

2012-13 was a busy time for the Department, with many signature events commemorating Canadian military accomplishments: the 95th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge; the unveiling of the Bomber Command Memorial in London, England; the 70th anniversary of the Dieppe Raid; the 60th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice; and the Year of the Korean War Veteran. The Department plans to build on the success of these events by exploring other ways to modernize its ceremonies, with a particular focus on how to make them more relevant to today's Veterans.

[13] 2010 National Client Survey

The Department worked with other federal departments, and with a number of organizations and countries to start the planning for the First World War Centennial. Initiatives to date include $5 million in Budget 2013 towards the construction of a permanent Education Centre at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial, a Canada-France Declaration ensuring continued cooperation between the countries regarding commemoration of 20th century conflicts, and upgrading some site infrastructure at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial.

Veterans Affairs Canada continues to prepare war-themed educational materials for youth, including three new learning activities for the Korean War Anniversary[xxii] website, and a Quick Response (QR) code for the 2012 Veterans' Week materials (linked to an online Teacher's Guide). More interactive activities included a commemorative ceremony and candlelight tribute by Army Cadets at the National War Memorial in Ottawa; and students participating in the Historica Dominion Institute's "Encounters with Canada" Vimy Week program.

In Budget 2013, the Government announced that amounts for funeral assistance for Veterans would more than double, increasing from $3,600 to $7,386. The list of eligible funeral expenses is also now less prescriptive, providing greater flexibility for families. In addition to these improvements, the full cost of burials continues to be covered.

In June 2012, the Minister of Veterans Affairs announced the government's intention to create a new official honour, the Bomber Command Bar, to recognize Veterans of Bomber Command in the skies over Europe during the Second World War. Veterans Affairs Canada was a leader in the creation of the Order in Council and design for the new Bomber Command Bar.

Sub Program 2.1.1 - Public Education and Awareness

Public knowledge is an essential component in honoring and preserving the memory of the achievements and sacrifices of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service. This activity increases knowledge by creating and distributing Canadian military historical and remembrance-related resources, learning resources, as well as promotional products such as posters and pins. Printed materials are distributed free of charge, multimedia and interactive tools are made available on the Canada Remembers Web site, and social media tools are used to expand our reach. Knowledge and awareness is also fostered by supporting the Historica-Dominion Institute's Encounters with Canada program, providing interpretive guided tours to visitors at European sites and supporting summer-time guided tours which interpret the National War Memorial and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier to visitors. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
8.5	8.8	(0.3)	27.4	34.4	(7.0)

Performance Results

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
Canadians, including youth, have increased knowledge and understanding of the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service	% of Canadians who are knowledgeable about and proud of the achievements and sacrifices of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service	70%	77%
	% of educators using Veterans Affairs Canada educational resources who report increased youth knowledge and understanding of the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service	80%	98%
	# of visitors to the Vimy and Beaumont-Hamel (BH) Memorial Sites	1 Million	713, 920 visitors to Vimy Memorial and 152,051 visitors to Beaumont-Hamel, totaling 865,971 (Note: The actual number of visitors is based on counters which were used for the full year in 2012-13. The target of one million visitors was based on prior years' estimates.)

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Each year, Veterans Affairs Canada employs a total of 45 bilingual Canadian student guides at the Canadian National Vimy Memorial and the Beaumont-Hamel Newfoundland Memorial, both located in France, the only two National Historic Sites located outside Canada. These Canadian youth greet the visitors to the sites (around 866,000 in 2012-13) and give guided tours to over 60,000 visitors a year on the significance of the sites and of Canada's role in the First World War.

On average, 77% of Canadians surveyed in the *2012 Attitudes Towards Remembrance and Veterans' Week survey* felt that they were knowledgeable about (73%) and proud of (80%) the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans and those who died serving their country.

Veterans' Week resources such as Tales of Animals in War, The Canada Remembers Times, and Take Time to Remember were well received by educators again this year. Of those educators who completed the on-line evaluation, 98% agreed that the Veterans' Week learning material helped to increase knowledge and understanding in young people of the sacrifices and achievements of Canadian Veterans and those who died in service. Almost all educators (99%) said they would use the Veterans' week learning material in future. The materials were rated as follows:

- Take Time to Remember – 99%
- Tales of Animals in War – 98%
- The Canada Remembers Times – 94%

Veterans Affairs Canada's educational materials were shipped within two weeks (the published service standard) 99% of the time. This exceeded the target rate of 80%.

Veterans Affairs Canada also recognizes the importance of technology in today's classrooms, and so—in addition to continuing with the successful paper-based learning materials—the Department will also develop more Remembrance-themed applications for use with mobile devices.

Sub Program 2.1.2 - Ceremonies and Events

Veterans Affairs Canada organizes ceremonies and events, both in Canada and overseas, to remind Canadians of the legacy of those who served Canada and to demonstrate Canada's leadership in recognizing their service. The Department works closely with the voluntary sector, quasi-governmental and international organizations, including foreign, regional and local government institutions on commemorative events, including *Veterans' Week*[xxiii] and significant military milestones honouring those who made the ultimate sacrifice. The Department assists with burial ceremonies when remains of Canadian soldiers of the First or Second World War are discovered in Europe. World War and Korean War medals are also issued to recognize Veterans, as is the *Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation*[xxiv]. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
5.1	5.6	(0.5)	28.2	35.4	(7.2)

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Important Canadian military milestones are marked regionally, nationally and internationally	# of national, regional and international remembrance ceremonies and events posted to Veterans Affairs Canada's Calendar of Events	800	600 (see Note)

Note: 98.5% of these events are posted to the Department's website calendar by external organizations.

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

There were a number of successful ceremonies and events in 2012-13, including:

- A special commemorative ceremony (held in April 2012) to mark the 95th anniversary of the Battle of Vimy Ridge in France. Almost 5,000 Canadian youth took part in the ceremony, and events were also held in Ottawa, Toronto, and Vancouver;
- In June 2012, 42 Canadian Veterans of Bomber Command travelled to London, England, with the Minister of Veterans Affairs, to witness the unveiling of the Bomber Command Memorial by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. The Canadian contingent was among hundreds of allied Bomber Command Veterans who gathered for the ceremony;
- Veterans of the Dieppe Raid joined the Minister in August 2012, in France, to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the battle; and
- 2013 has been declared the Year of the Korean War Veteran[xxv], to coincide with the 60th anniversary of the Korean War armistice. Many activities and events have taken place to commemorate the service and sacrifices of Canadians who fought in the war. These included an ice sculpture as part of Winterlude 2013 in Ottawa, and a re-enactment of the Imjin River Hockey Game played by Canadian soldiers in Korea during the winters of 1952 and 1953. In July

2013, the Minister of Veterans Affairs and Canadian Korean War Veterans participated in a national ceremony in Korea to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Korean War Armistice.

In 2012-13 Veterans Affairs Canada continued to monitor and analyze its research into effective and relevant recognition of modern-day Veterans, a very complex issue. The Department continued to revise the *Canadian Armed Forces around the World* learning kit for its eventual publication and distribution. The Department also supported the National Arts Centre's Canada Day Tribute to Veterans in Ottawa, supported and participated in various National Peacekeepers' Day ceremonies across the country, and paid tribute to five former members of the Canadian Armed Forces with the Minister's Commendation Award Ceremony in London.

During the year, more than 600 national, regional, and international remembrance ceremonies and events were posted to Veterans Affairs Canada's online calendar; nearly all of these (98.5%) were led by external organizations. Although the number of external events submitted to the Department was down from the previous year, the Calendar of Events still provided an effective venue to promote and raise awareness of remembrance activities across Canada. More vigorous promotion of this tool may be required to increase the number of postings in the future.

The Department's performance related to the timely processing of Honours and Awards continued to be strong in 2012-13, with applications processed and medals shipped 94% of the time within the published service standards (8 weeks for first issue medals, 8 weeks for decisions related to lost medals and 4 weeks for shipping them). The service standard target is 80%.

Sub Program 2.1.3 – Partnerships and Collaborations

Veterans Affairs Canada partners with a variety of government departments, non-profit organizations, educational institutions, provincial and municipal governments and corporate entities that share mutual remembrance responsibilities or goals. These mutually supportive arrangements enable the Department to further extend its reach internationally, nationally and in communities across Canada (e.g. The Royal Canadian Legion, the Friends of Vimy in France, and National Defence in Canada). Veterans Affairs Canada provides funding assistance for commemorative projects through the Community Engagement Partnership Fund, the Cenotaph/Monument Restoration Program and the Community War Memorial Program. Additionally the Department is looking to collaborate with the private sector to deliver remembrance initiatives and messaging. This program is delivered through contributions and operating funds.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
3.6	3.6	0.0	7.5	9.5	(1.9)

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Canadians have increased opportunities to participate in remembrance activities in communities across Canada	# of opportunities (funding agreements) Canadians have to participate in remembrance activities in communities across Canada	227	218 opportunities supported by the Department

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

In 2012-13, Veterans Affairs Canada provided financial support for approximately 218 remembrance opportunities in communities across Canada. Of these, 140 were for Remembrance activities, 55 were to help restore cenotaphs and monuments, and 23 were to construct new memorials.

On average, decisions for all three funding programs were rendered within the published 12 week service standard 93% of the time in 2012-13. (Target: 80%)

Streamlining the Department's business processes has helped to improve the time to reach a decision for its largest remembrance funding program, the Community Engagement Partnership Fund. Last year saw a dramatic improvement for its funding decisions: they were made within 12 weeks 81% of the time, up from just 50% in 2011-12. Efforts continue to find more ways to cut red tape and make the Community Engagement Partnership Fund even more efficient. As well, the Cenotaph/Monument Restoration Program and the Community War Memorial Program both achieved 100% for their service standards.

Sub Program 2.1.4 – Memorials and Cemetery Maintenance

This activity preserves the memory of deceased Canadians who served their country in war and peace by maintaining in perpetuity symbols of remembrance. This includes responsibility for the 14 World War memorials in Europe, grave markers all over the world and two Departmental cemeteries in Canada. War memorials and graves of the over 110,000 war dead in Europe are cared for through a partnership with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. An annual grant is also provided for the maintenance of the graves of Canadian war dead buried in Korea. Two unique memorials to those who died in service to Canada, the Canadian Virtual War Memorial and the Books of Remembrance are also maintained through this activity. This program is delivered through grants and operating funds.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
19.0	16.7	2.3	33.1	41.6	(8.5)

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Canadian memorials, cemeteries and grave markers are maintained in perpetuity	# of grave marker maintenance items completed	7,000	Did not meet target: 4,050 maintenance items completed on 2,622 grave markers
	% of overseas memorial maintenance work completed as identified in annual agreement with service provider	85%	80%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Under the Memorial and Cemetery Maintenance Program, 4,050 maintenance tasks were carried out across Canada on 2,622 Veterans' grave markers. The varying scope of work is always a challenge, and was more so than usual in 2012–13. This contributed to not meeting the target of 7,000.

With respect to overseas memorial maintenance work, only 80% of planned work was completed. This was due partly to adverse weather conditions, and partly to unexpected technical problems encountered by the service provider.

There were 265,541 visitors to the Canadian Virtual War Memorial and on-line Books of Remembrance.

There were 217,321 visits to the Memorial Chamber (in the Peace Tower, Parliament of Canada) to view the Books of Remembrance.

Sub Program 2.1.5 – Funeral and Burial Program

This program provides financial assistance towards funeral, burial and grave marking expenses of eligible Veterans to recognize their service to Canada. Under the *Veterans' Burial Regulations 2005*, assistance is available for deceased service-qualified Veterans whose deaths are a result of their service or whose estates do not have sufficient funds for a dignified funeral, burial and grave marking. The Funeral and Burial Program is administered by the Last Post Fund, an independent, non-profit organization, on behalf of Veterans Affairs Canada. The program is delivered through grants.

Financial Resources ($ millions)			Human Resources (FTEs)		
Planned Spending 2012-13	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
11.3	8.3	3.0	1.7	2.1	(0.4)

Performance Results			
Expected Results	**Performance Indicators**	**Targets**	**Actual Results**
Financial support is provided to eligible Veterans for funeral and burial expenses	% of time decisions for means-tested funeral and burial benefits are rendered within the published 30 day service standard	80%	87%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Expenditures for the Funeral and Burial program were $3 million less than anticipated, due to a decline in applicants to the Last Post Fund[xxvi]. Spending on the Commonwealth War Graves Commission[xxvii] grant was also down, mostly due to favourable exchange rates between the Canadian dollar and other currencies.

There are two components to this program. The burial component of the program covers the cost of a plot, cemetery charges such as opening and closing, and the actual cost of cremation. Budget 2013 proposed to simplify the funeral component of the program, more than doubling its reimbursement rate from $3,600 to $7,386. The goal is to help ensure that recipients, no matter what their financial situation, are able to afford an appropriate funeral. As well, the former list of eligible expenses was replaced by a number of general statements, which allow for greater flexibility. As a result of this change, funeral services involving religious or cultural differences and non-traditional practices are now better accommodated. Most importantly, it also makes the program more user-friendly, at a time when families and next-of-kin are in a state of distress and unable to cope with bureaucracy. This improvement furthers Veterans Affairs Canada's *Cutting Red Tape for Veterans* initiative, designed to simplify access to policies and programs, and to make the system less complicated for users.

Program 3.1 – Veterans Ombudsman

3.1
Veterans Ombudsman

This program provides Veterans and other individuals (War Service Veterans, Veterans and serving members of the Canadian Armed Forces (Regular and Reserve), members and former members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, spouses, common-law partners, survivors and primary caregivers, other eligible dependants and family members, other eligible individuals and representatives of the afore-mentioned groups) with the opportunity to request independent reviews of their complaints. It promotes fair and equitable treatment in accessing the services, benefits and programs from Veterans Affairs Canada. This is accomplished by: providing them with information and referrals to facilitate their access to programs and services; reviewing and addressing complaints arising from the Veterans Bill of Rights and decisions on benefits and services for which there is no right to appeal to the Veterans Review and Appeal Board; and researching and investigating emerging and existing systemic issues related to the provisions of the Department's programs and services and providing information and recommendations to the Minister in relation to those issues. This program is delivered through operating funds.

Financial Resources ($ millions)					Human Resources (FTEs)[14]		
Main Estimates 2012-13	**Total Authorities 2012-13**	**Planned Spending 2012-13**	**Actual Spending 2012-13**	**Difference**	**Planned 2012-13**	**Actual 2012-13**	**Difference**
5.9	6.2	5.9	5.1	0.8	40.0	44.0	(4.0)

Performance Results

Expected Results	Performance Indicators	Targets	Actual Results
Veterans and other individuals are aware and have access to Ombudsman services	Percentage of contacts responded to	90%	96%
	Number of unique visitors to the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman website / social media	Same or increase from 2011-12 statistics (4,102 unique visitors to the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman website)	14,330 unique visitors to the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman website (August - March, 2013)[15] 789 unique visitors to the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman Facebook page
Veterans and other individuals, Veterans Affairs Canada, influencers and government decision makers are aware of the issues and recommendations raised by the Ombudsman Office	Number of appearances to Senate and House of Commons committees on Veterans Affairs/Briefings to Parliamentarians	5	2 appearances at House of Commons Committees 3 briefings to Parliamentarians

[14] Includes 10 Veterans Affairs Canada positions that provide support to the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman.
[15] Changes to the Website mean that information is not available for the period before August 2012.

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

In 2012-13, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman continued to provide direct assistance through early intervention activities to ensure complaints, information requests, and referrals were resolved in a timely and appropriate manner. Of the 6,732 contacts the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman received in 2012–13, via phone, email and letter, the majority (73%) were phone calls. Of these, almost all (96%) of calls during business hours were answered promptly—surpassing the published service standard of 90%. This resulted in adding 1,845 new cases to the 236 cases from the previous year.

In 2012-13, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman addressed and closed 1,953 cases:

- *90% resolved, referred to another agency, or not substantiated*
- *10% outside the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman's mandate or required changes to legislation forming the basis of reviews or investigations*

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman initiated and investigated several systemic issues, releasing the following reports in 2012-13:

Honouring and Connecting with Canada's Veterans: A National Veterans Identification Card[xxviii] (October 2012)

Veterans' Right to Disclosure - A Matter of Procedural Fairness[xxix] (November 2012)

Improving the New Veterans Charter: The Parliamentary Review [xxx](January 2013)

The Office of the Veterans Ombudsman continued to follow-up on recommendations made in previous reports (*Veterans' Right to Fair Adjudication*[xxxi], *Veterans' Right to Know Reasons for Decisions: A Matter of Procedural Fairness*[xxxii]) and was in the final stages of reviewing Long Term Care, the Veterans Independence Program, Assisted Living and the RCMP Support Programs. As well, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman initiated the review of 25 emerging issues related to areas of application and interpretation of Policies and Procedures.

In 2012-13, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman engaged Veterans and other stakeholders to inform and educate them on issues of concern and emerging priorities through several initiatives, such as conducting town hall meetings across the country, appearing before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs, and engaging Canadians online via social media.

In July 2012, the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman established a working group on RCMP/Veterans Affairs Canada Pension Benefits and Services. Its purpose was to examine the impact of benefits administered by Veterans Affairs Canada for the RCMP (both serving and discharged members).

The Ombudsman met twice during the year with the Veterans Ombudsman Advisory Council and consulted them on several issues the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman is reviewing. The Advisory Council is made up of Veterans' representatives, professional advisors from academia, health care, rehabilitation and other fields as well as other members with varied areas of expertise. The structure of this group changed from a committee to council during 2012-13.

Program 4.1 – Internal Services

4.1
Internal Services

Internal Services are groups of related activities and resources that support the needs of programs and other corporate obligations of an organization. These groups are: Management and Oversight Services; Communications Services; Legal Services; Human Resources Management Services; Financial Management Services; Information Management Services; Information Technology Services; Real Property Services; Materiel Services; Acquisition Services; and Travel and Other Administrative Services.

Internal Services include only those activities and resources that apply across an organization and not to those provided specifically to a program.

Financial Resources ($ millions)					Human Resources (FTEs)		
Main Estimates 2012-13	Total Authorities 2012-13	Planned Spending 2012-13	Actual Spending 2012-13	Difference	Planned 2012-13	Actual 2012-13	Difference
70.4	80.7	70.4	80.4	(10.0)	709.0	680.0	29.0

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

In keeping with Veterans Affairs Canada's role as a key contributor to government-wide initiatives for modernizing and improving the public service, the Department worked on areas such as procurement, finance, and human resources. Partnerships with other government organizations, such as Shared Services Canada and Public Works and Government Services Canada, are proving to be valuable in reducing red tape and delivering services more efficiently.

A national working group with representation from across the country led discussions on areas for improvement and actions identified by the Public Service Employee Survey. The Action Plan which was developed includes 51 commitments which will be measured through biannual reports.

With respect to Veterans Affairs Canada staffing, in order to comply with the Common Human Resources Business Process, several improvements were made, including changes to the Exit Interview process for departing staff and integrating and moving online Performance Management and Learning Plans.

As part of its efforts to strengthen the protection of personal information, in May 2012 the Department launched Privacy Action Plan 2.0[xxxiii]—building on the success of the original ten-point Privacy Action Plan of 2010. The new measures focused on five areas: Training and Awareness, Governance, Administration and Practices, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Reporting and Priority Identification.

Some highlights include:

- Training employees in privacy principles;
- Streamlining consent forms;

- Ensuring that new initiatives comply with all privacy requirements; and
- Monitoring transactions that involve personal information.

The Department is committed to pursuing the highest standards in privacy protection, and all the key elements of the new plan were fully implemented by October 2012. In order for Veterans to be confident that their personal information is safe, Veterans Affairs Canada recognizes that the price of a privacy-sensitive culture is eternal vigilance.

Federal Sustainable Development Strategy (FSDS)

FSDS Goal	FSDS Performance Indicator	FSDS Target	FSDS Performance Status
Greening Government Operations	Percentage of FSDS GGO targets that are on track to meet / have met target expectations or are on track to exceed / have exceeded target expectations (as per self-selected traffic light indicators).	100%	100%

Performance Analysis and Lessons Learned

Veterans Affairs Canada participates in the federal environmental targets through the Internal Services Program. The Department contributes to the Federal Sustainable Development Strategy and contributes to the Greening Government Operations in the following target areas of Theme IV: Green Buildings; Surplus Electronic and Electrical Equipment; Printing Unit Reduction; Paper Consumption; Green Meetings, and Green Procurement.

For additional details on Veterans Affairs Canada's Greening Government Operations activities please see the Supplementary Information Tables.

Section III Supplementary Information

Financial Statements Highlights

Condensed Statement of Operations and Departmental Net Financial Position

Veterans Affairs Canada Condensed Statement of Operations and Departmental Net Financial Position (Unaudited) For the Year Ended March 31, 2013 ($ thousands)					
	2012-13 Planned Results	**2012-13 Actual**	**2011-12 Actual**	**$ Change (2012-13 Planned vs. Actual)**	**$ Change (2012-13 Actual vs. 2011-12 Actual)**
Total expenses	3,618,119	3,515,349	3,517,101	102,770	(1,752)
Total revenues	-	21	19	(21)	2
Net cost of operations before government funding and transfers	3,618,119	3,515,328	3,528,109	102,791	(12,781)
Departmental net financial position	83,867	86,012	88,010	(2,145)	(1,998)

The Department's expenses in 2012–13 were relatively consistent with those of 2011–12. Spending on continuing operations decreased by less than 1% ($2 million)—primarily due to two factors that offset one another: a decrease in operating spending of $70 million, and an increase of $68 million in program spending.

The decrease in operating expenditures was the result of several factors such as: the *Cutting Red Tape for Veterans* initiative; the implementation of Budget 2012 decisions; the conclusion of ex gratia payments related to health effects of Agent Orange use at Canadian Armed Forces Base Gagetown; and a decrease in the use of purchased health services due to a decline in the number of War Service Veterans.

The increase in program spending was also the result of several factors, chief of which (as in previous years) was greater spending on New Veterans Charter programs. Most of this was in Disability Awards ($68 million) and Earnings Loss ($40 million). These increases were partially offset by a decrease in the funding of the Department's traditional programs due to a decline in the number of traditional war service Veterans. The largest decrease can be found in Disability Pensions ($61 million). This decrease was partially offset by an increase in Veterans Independence Program ($23 million).

Condensed Statement of Financial Position

Veterans Affairs Canada Condensed Statement of Financial Position (Unaudited) As at March 31, 2013 ($ thousands)			
	2012-13	**2011-12**	**$ Change**
Total net liabilities	99,618	88,282	11,336
Total net financial assets	82,525	66,242	16,283
Departmental net debt	17,093	22,040	(4,947)
Total non-financial assets	103,105	110,050	(6,945)
Departmental net financial position	86,012	88,010	(1,998)

Net liabilities increased by approximately $11 million in 2013. Accounts payable and accrued liabilities increased by $15 million which was partially offset by a $4 million decrease in employee vacation and severance liability. Net financial assets increased by $16 million. The consolidated revenue fund increased by $15 million and accounts receivable increased by $1 million. Non-financial assets decreased by approximately $7 million in 2013, primarily as a result of amortization.

Supplementary Information Tables

The following Supplementary Information Tables can be found on Veterans Affairs Canada's website[xxxiv].

- Details on Transfer Payments Programs
- Greening Government Operations (GGO)
- Internal Audits and Evaluations
- Response to Parliamentary Committees and External Audits
- Sources of Respendable and Non-Respendable Revenue
- Status Report on Projects Operating with Specific Treasury Board Approval

Tax Expenditures and Evaluations Report

The tax system can be used to achieve public policy objectives through the application of special measures such as low tax rates, exemptions, deductions, deferrals and credits. The Department of Finance publishes cost estimates and projections for these measures annually in the *Tax Expenditures and Evaluations*[xxxv] publication. The tax measures presented in the Tax Expenditures and Evaluations publication are the sole responsibility of the Minister of Finance.

Section IV: Other Items of Interest

Organizational Contact Information

To ask questions about Veterans Affairs Canada, or any of its programs or services, call the General Enquiries phone line at **1-866-522-2122**.

To contact the Office of the Veterans Ombudsman, call **1-877-330-4343**.

Websites

The following sites give more detailed information on the material provided in this report.

Veterans Affairs Canada:
veterans.gc.ca

Office of the Veterans Ombudsman:
ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca

Publications

Veterans Affairs Canada produces a number of publications about its programs and services. Online versions of these are available on the Department's website: veterans.gc.ca

For more information about this report, contact:

Integrated Corporate Management Division
Veterans Affairs Canada
PO Box 7700
Charlottetown PE C1A 8M9
E-mail: plan@vac-acc.gc.ca

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[i] Canada Remembers Program, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance
[ii] Veterans Bill of Rights, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/bor/vbor
[iii] Veterans Benefits Browser, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/benefits
[iv] Veterans Benefits Browser, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/benefits
[v] My VAC Book, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/services/mvb
[vi] mobile applications
[vii] My VAC Account, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/e_services
[viii] Veterans Transition Action Plan, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/department/reports/transition-action-plan
[ix] My VAC Account, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/e_services
[x] My VAC Book, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/services/mvb
[xi] PTSD Coach Canada, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/etools/ptsd-coach-canada

[xii] OSI Connect, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/mental-health/osi/osi-app
[xiii] *Veterans Benefits Browser*, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/benefits
[xiv] Helmets to Hardhats, http://helmetstohardhats.ca/
[xv] Hire a Veteran, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/services/jobs
[xvi] Audit Report on Veterans Affairs Canada, http://www.priv.gc.ca/information/pub/ar-vr/ar-vr_vac_2012_e.asp
[xvii] *Honouring and Connecting with Canada's Veterans: A National Veterans Identification*, http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/reports-rapports/identity-identite-11-2012-eng.cfm
[xviii] *Veterans' Right to Disclosure - A Matter of Procedural Fairness*, http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/reports-rapports/disclosure-divulgation-11-2012-eng.cfm
[xix] *Improving the New Veterans Charter: The Parliamentary Review*, http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/reports-rapports/reviewcharter01-examencharte01-01-2013-eng.cfm
[xx] Public Accounts of Canada, http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca/recgen/cpc-pac/index-eng.html
[xxi] *Veterans Benefits Browser*, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/benefits
[xxii] Korean War Anniversary, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/feature/koreanwar/learning
[xxiii] *Veterans' Week*, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/remembrance/veterans-week
[xxiv] *Minister of Veterans Affairs Commendation*, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/department/mincom
[xxv] Year of the Korean War Veteran, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/department/press/viewrelease/1672
[xxvi] Last Post Fund, http://www.lastpostfund.ca
[xxvii] Commonwealth War Graves Commission, http://www.cwgc.org/
[xxviii] *Honouring and Connecting with Canada's Veterans: A National Veterans Identification Card*, http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/reports-rapports/identity-identite-11-2012-eng.cfm
[xxix] *Veterans' Right to Disclosure - A Matter of Procedural Fairness*, http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/reports-rapports/disclosure-divulgation-11-2012-eng.cfm
[xxx] *Improving the New Veterans Charter: The Parliamentary Review*, http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/reports-rapports/reviewcharter01-examencharte01-01-2013-eng.cfm
[xxxi] *Veterans' Right to Fair Adjudication*, http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/reports-rapports/vrab-tacra-03-2012-eng.cfm
[xxxii] *Veterans' Right to Know Reasons for Decisions: A Matter of Procedural Fairness*, http://www.ombudsman-veterans.gc.ca/reports-rapports/reason-raison-eng.cfm
[xxxiii] Privacy Action Plan 2.0, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/department/reports/privacy-action-plan/plan2-0
[xxxiv] Veterans Affairs Canada's website, http://www.veterans.gc.ca/eng/department/reports/dpr-rmr/2012-2013/tables
[xxxv] Tax Expenditures and Evaluations, http://www.fin.gc.ca/purl/taxexp-eng.asp